

City of Maple Grove

Gravel Mining Area Special Area Plan

2008 Update – October 5, 2009



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I. INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

The Maple Grove Gravel Mining Area (GMA) consists of almost 2,000 acres of active gravel mines and related activities less than fifteen miles from downtown Minneapolis, with superb visibility and access to the regional highway system, at the northwestern corner of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. In the decade or so since adoption of the Gravel Mining Area Special Area Plan (GMASAP) in 1997 approximately 654 acres in the northwestern and southwestern portions of the GMA have either developed or have had plans for development approved (not including ROW and ponding areas). As a huge expanse of largely unoccupied land surrounded by urbanization within a rapidly growing suburban setting, it continues to represent a unique opportunity for the region to develop a different sort of built suburban environment while meeting the area's needs for additional housing, goods and services, employment, and recreation.

With many years of useful gravel resources still to be extracted from the GMA, the City of Maple Grove considered in the 1980s and 1990s what would happen to the area when the mining ceases. The City began planning for the use of this area with a two-pronged approach. First, the City addressed the planning issues internal to Maple Grove in a cooperative process, involving a task force of community leaders, residents, and landowners. Together they articulated a vision for the Gravel Mining Area that would be bold, unique and attractive to residents, employees, and investors alike. The planning process, history and vision are included as **Chapter II** of this Plan.

The task force started with the overall goal to **“realize a plan for the Gravel Mining Area that is equal to its potential.”** Throughout this process the City has maintained, in the words of another task force goal, that **“the development of a dense, compact, mixed use development, located within the MUSA Line is the opposite of urban sprawl.”** The hope for the area is to create a distinctive environment that blends the desirable elements of typical suburban life with the character and pedestrian scale of more traditional urban neighborhoods. The task force also specifically addressed a major metropolitan issue by urging the City “to provide high density housing opportunities, as well as affordable and accessible housing for citizens in all stages of the life cycle.” The Goals set forth by the Task Force are included as **Chapter III** of this Plan.

The second prong of the planning process involved coordination and review with metropolitan and regional agencies. The City has made significant efforts to communicate and coordinate with various agencies that would be called on to review and approve various aspects of the Gravel Mining Area plan. The City held informal meetings with Metropolitan Council staff, invited various agency and department representatives on a guided tour of the Gravel Mining Area, and shared with them the plans and goals in process for the Gravel Mining Area. The City prepared an Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) Scoping Document, similar to the scoping EAW, to give all reviewing agencies a chance to see the plan, comment on its features, and indicate the issues that might be of concern before formal environmental review was initiated. This step was not required under the EQB Rules, but is an indication that

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Maple Grove believes the Gravel Mining Area represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the region and that the City is sincere about involving the region's decision makers in serious discussion about how to bring the Gravel Mining Area plan to reality.

On October 7, 1996, the Maple Grove City Council officially approved the Final AUAR for the Gravel Mining Area. (In accordance with Minnesota Environmental Review Program rules the GMA AUAR was updated in June 2005.) The outcome of the initial AUAR process and its update was a series of mitigation steps which will be necessary during the development of the Gravel Mining Area. These efforts included:

- an obligation to secure all of the permits identified in the AUAR;
- revise the City's Comprehensive Plan;
- continue to implement components of previous planning efforts identified in the AUAR;
- monitor traffic to ensure it does not exceed the capacity of the regional roadways;
- encourage the use of travel demand management practices (TDM) throughout the GMA;
- monitor wastewater flows to ensure they do not exceed the capacity of regional waste treatment infrastructure;
- and consider possible measures to protect residential development from anticipated roadway noise.

II. PLAN HISTORY, PROCESS AND VISION

LAND OWNER INVOLVEMENT

Long before community visioning became the vogue in land use planning, the major land owners in the Maple Grove Gravel Mining Area had their own vision for the area.

Throughout the decades they continued to reassure the City that they were committed to holding the land until the time was right to develop it in a very significant way.

Continuing to be true to their word, they have refused offers to sell off the bulk of their land holdings selling only measured amounts for projects the likes of Arbor Lakes, The Shoppes at Arbor Lakes, The Bridges at Arbor Lakes and The Fountains at Arbor Lakes and there remains today a contiguous area of almost 1,100 of the original 2,000 acres in the Gravel Mining Area.

Over two decades ago, the progression of mining activities, the need to complete some major County roadway connections through the area, and general development pressure have combined to convince the landowners that the time had come to plan seriously for the future development of this land. In 1985, the landowners sponsored the development of an infrastructure plan for the Gravel Mining Area. This plan, known as GMAP, contained detailed analysis and recommendations on reclamation, storm drainage, grading, sanitary sewer, and transportation. The plan served as a framework for the recent AUAR, and remains a valid analysis of infrastructure issues in the area.

In the years prior to the development and adoption of the GMASAP, numerous voices within the City had also expressed the desire for a community focal point or downtown for Maple Grove. In 1992, the University of Minnesota Design Center for the American Urban Landscape, now the Metropolitan Design Center, conducted a series of workshops to explore the possibilities of building such a place within the Gravel Mining Area and to help prepare a report.

http://www.designcenter.umn.edu/reference_ctr/publications/pdfs/LCMR1MGNwsltr.pdf

A task force was formed to work with University faculty to formulate goals for the area and generate and evaluate design concepts. Although the specific downtown area envisioned in this initial effort has since been developed in a different way and in a different place, many of the basic goals and principles remain.

PLANNING TASK FORCE

The genesis of the vision and approach outlined in this Comprehensive Plan also started with the landowners. After numerous meetings with City staff, it was agreed that a Gravel Mining Area Planning Task Force should be formed consisting of members of the Planning Commission, City Council and other City boards and commissions. The land owners and concerned citizens also served on the Task Force. Dahlgren, Shardlow, and Uban was hired to serve as staff to the Task Force, and was charged with the

development of a vision and strategy for developing the Gravel Mining Area. This vision was developed through consensus of the members of the Task Force. A series of goals was established by the Task Force, and are contained in this Plan. In addition, a Concept Plan and associated development program were prepared.

THE VISION

While the detailed Goals and Plan elements of this document more fully describe the Vision for the Gravel Mining Area, it can be briefly summarized with the following points describing the characteristics of the development of the Gravel Mining Area:

- When developed, the area should make the City proud, and provide a lasting legacy for the land owners.
- The area should be a significant regional landmark, a showcase, and a demonstration project for the best in recent development trends.
- The area should provide a focal point for the City.
- The area should contain a balance of land uses, housing types, and amenities.
- The area should be intense and urban in character.
- The area should be pedestrian-friendly, while providing an effective and efficient transportation system.

This Plan attempts to capture the essence of the vision for the area, and future actions by the City and land owners will mold and change the details of this vision over time – with this Plan as a framework to guide them.

ACTION STEPS

The City and landowners since adoption of the GMASAP continue the implementation of their plans for this area. The first step toward ensuring that the Concept Plan could be developed and the City's Goals achieved was the environmental review process. In October, 1996, the City completed the AUAR which explored the potential impacts of development according to the Concept Plan envisioned by the Task Force. All of the environmental agencies involved in the future development of the Gravel Mining Area were asked to comment on the Plan for the area, and some modifications to the Plan were made to ensure compliance with each agency's requirements. Specific mitigation measures were set forth to guide development of the Gravel Mining Area in the future.

The City adopted the GMASAP in 1997 as part of its Comprehensive Plan and updated it in 2008.

III. PLAN GOALS

The following Goals and Objectives were developed by the Gravel Mining Area Task Force, which was comprised of landowners, citizens, business leaders and City staff. These Goals, approved by the Task Force on March 16, 1995 and as updated as part of the 2008 GMASAP update, have been re-organized below for ease in preparation and updating of individual Plan Elements. It is recognized that many of these goals have been achieved in whole or in part since the adoption of the plan which in turn has helped to establish, among other things, a framework to help to continue to guide the development of the remainder of the GMA.

A. GENERAL GOALS

1. Realize a plan for the Gravel Mining Area that is equal to its potential.
2. Establish and maintain a cooperative working relationship between the property owners and the City throughout the planning and development process, a relationship that balances a deep respect for the land owner's rights and objectives with the understanding that the City has both the authority and the responsibility to plan for its future.
3. Develop a broad consensus in support of the concept plan for the development of the Gravel Mining Area, through the work of the Task Force and other efforts.
4. The City of Maple Grove expects master planning in a collaborative fashion between property owners and property owners and the City over large areas as part of the initial development plan review process. Such master planning would increase the likelihood that a particular development or developments in aggregate would meet the GMASAP goals of truly mixed-use development, strong transit connections, and realizing a plan that is equal to the potential of the area.
5. Develop the Gravel Mining Area in a manner that is unique and one that serves to establish Maple Grove as an innovative and forward thinking community.
6. Be responsible regional citizens and promote a development pattern in the area that reflects sound regional land use planning.
7. Create a wonderful community image and one that will be a lasting testimonial to the land owners.

B. LAND USE

1. Establish this area as the regional center in the northwestern portion of the Twin Cities Region for business and industry, civic and cultural activities, governmental services, and retail shopping.
2. Create a distinct area which blends the convenience, high mobility, open space and comfort of suburban life, with the accessibility, character and pedestrian scale of traditional downtowns.
3. Develop landmark buildings in the visible locations along the freeway corridor.
4. Encourage the careful incorporation of a balanced and interrelated mix of land uses, activities, and intensities throughout the area.
5. Encourage creative development approaches, features, and activities that will draw people to the area, to live, work, socialize and play.
6. Develop a strong, balanced tax base in the Gravel Mining Area.
7. Strive to create a self-sustaining pattern of land uses in the community, with employment, housing, shopping, entertainment and other cultural and social components.
8. Continue to explore and promote this area for the location of unique cultural activities.
9. Provide high density housing opportunities, as well as affordable and accessible housing for citizens in all stages of the life cycle.
10. Integrate transit planning into the land use planning process.
11. Create a community gathering place that is well served by roadways, but is not dominated by the automobile.
12. Evaluate the benefits of locating a college or university in the area.
13. Continue to explore creative ways to share facilities with the school system in this area.
14. Plan a comprehensive open space system to serve the entire area at full development and devise a strategy to implement this system in logical stages as the development of the area evolves.

15. Recognize that the Gravel Mining Area presents a remarkable opportunity to develop the land more efficiently and at significantly higher densities than elsewhere in the City. This additional density will provide the opportunity to support a system of distinctive project amenities and smaller, more intimate shopping areas.
16. Evaluate the potential and as opportunities become available, promote the development of a large medical center/acute care facility.

In exploring the benefits and implications of locating numerous community facilities in the Gravel Mining Area, the City has realized the development of a community center, government center and beginnings of a civic campus and continues to work with the County to develop a library in conjunction with a band shell and town green in the heart of the civic campus. As part of the 2008 GMASAP update, it has been decided to retain the golf course as a land use option in the GMA.

C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Maximize the development potential of the Project Area.
2. Establish the Gravel Mining Area as Maple Grove's premier development area.
3. Increase the City's total assessed valuation significantly through the implementation of the Master Plan for the Gravel Mining Area.
4. Complete the necessary research and analysis to truly understand the financial implications of this area. This information is to serve as essential background to better understand the land owner's expectations, financing opportunities, the potential for public-private partnerships, development agreements, and other tools including in the Regional Mixed Use Non-Retail Focus area, the consideration of development incentives for office/corporate facilities that would exceed three stories in height in this area and/or integrate transit facilities.
5. Develop an understanding of the financial challenges that the land owners face in holding the land until the right development opportunities are available, in light of major assessment and other holding costs and explore a wide range of creative ways to respond to these challenges.

D. TRANSPORTATION / INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Provide an acceptable level of transportation convenience.
2. Increase the capacity of the regional transportation system serving the area to the maximum level and limit the demand to not exceed this capacity.

3. Plan and stage the development of a local transportation system that will efficiently serve this level of demand.
4. Balance demand with the planned capacities of both the local and regional transportation systems.
5. Provide an aesthetically pleasing cityscape along the street system.
6. Ensure that the system segregates through traffic from neighborhood traffic without detriment to needs for local connectivity.
7. Plan and build roadways in a logical sequence, at appropriate sizes and on adequate rights of way.
8. Develop a clear, understandable and integrated local street system.
9. Plan and develop a local street system that will encourage placing buildings with their front and sides facing the streets and their backs and service areas facing away from view from the public roads.
10. Prepare and implement a master plan that will encourage the development of a safe and secure trail and sidewalk system.
11. Give strong consideration to safety in designing and developing the transportation system.
12. Through the planning and development of the transportation system, improve the current levels of service throughout the area to facilitate easier circulation and to lessen congestion.
13. Design and locate the public transportation stops to minimize conflicts with traffic flow and to lessen congestion.

E. COMMUNITY FACILITIES / IMAGE / AMENITIES

1. Develop this area as the civic, cultural and recreational center of Maple Grove.
2. Encourage the development of this area to convey a strong sense of vitality, prosperity, humanity, community pride, and unity that will establish a unique image and character for the City of Maple Grove.
3. Encourage the development of sensitively integrated landmark architecture and identity elements at key focal points to serve as reference points and to create a unique sense of place.

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4. Develop a system of unifying features, elements, and design standards to enhance the long term development of the area.
5. Encourage the environmentally sound preservation and use of ground water ponds as visual and appropriate recreational amenities where possible.
6. Encourage the development of drainage ponds and open space corridors as visual and recreational amenities.
7. Develop and maintain a comprehensive landscape master plan for the entire project area.

IMAGE

1. Develop a name for the area.
2. Continue Maple Grove's high standards for signage, building materials and architecture in the establishment of unique standards for the area.
3. Develop a blend of the practical and unique to create an imaginative and distinctive flavor, a sense of place for Maple Grove.

AMENITIES

1. Explore the potential for developing a golf course as part of the linked open space system.
2. Develop a specific landscape theme and master plan for the area.
3. Develop a linked system of water oriented recreation/transportation that is economically and environmentally prudent.
4. Develop an attractive and practical lighting concept for the area roads and trails.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

1. Create a "community focus" within the Gravel Mining Area through the coordinated and interrelated development of a wide variety of mutually supportive community facilities.
2. Establish and maintain a strong, interconnected public open space system, which can be linked with private open space, recreational facilities and amenities to create a unique place, both beautiful to look at and enriching to use.

3. Develop a central civic center related to a town square and central plaza. Develop a master plan that will preserve space for short and long-range development of civic facilities.
4. Develop a strong pedestrian walk and trail system linking the City and the area. Provide grade separation where feasible.
5. Develop a central park with trail linkages to the community.
6. Create opportunities for development at a human scale.

F. ENVIRONMENT

1. Protect the area and regional groundwater system from contamination both during construction and after development.
2. Provide for the environmentally sound recharge of the area and regional groundwater.
3. Establish a hardy, long lived urban forest within the Gravel Mining Area.
4. Build and maintain an integrated system of local streets that will efficiently disperse traffic to minimize congestion, noise and air quality impacts.
5. Establish an attractive urban forest or well landscaped areas which provide biodiversity for seasonal contrast, landmarks, and air quality enhancement.

G. REGULATIONS & PROCESS

1. Tailor a set of standards and regulations to respond to the unique challenges and opportunities presented by the development of the Gravel Mining Area. These regulations should establish a solid framework and demand compliance with the essential components of the adopted concept plan. They should also allow and facilitate the flexibility that will inevitably be necessary to respond effectively to the changes that will confront the development of this property.
2. Develop and adopt a strong Design Framework Manual and incorporate these guidelines and standards into the zoning for the area. (This could either occur as part of an approved Planned Unit Development, or as special requirements in a new zoning district or districts, or as conditions of a development agreement.) However it is implemented, the Design Framework Manual should establish standards and guidelines for every major design element including:
 - a. architectural elements (massing, exterior building materials, etc);
 - b. landscaping;

- c. signage;
 - d. lighting;
 - e. screening;
 - f. parking design; and
 - g. amenities, etc.
3. Continue to protect groundwater from contamination (no degradation of pre-development water quality).
4. Continue to monitor and protect the groundwater by following and updating the policies and high standards identified in the City Storm Water Management Plan, Gravel Mining Area Plan and Wellhead Protection Management Plan, for the management and treatment of storm water in the Gravel Mining Area.
5. Develop a Landscape Master Plan for the Gravel Mining Area. This plan should address:
 - a. landscaping along the minor arterial corridors.
 - b. native tree species and seasonal diversity.
 - c. diversity of species as corridor landmarks.
 - d. using shrubs and evergreens for visual screening.
 - e. using taller deciduous trees to mitigate noise and enhance air quality.
 - f. topsoil requirements for the growth and sustained health of urban forest.
 - g. cluster planting.
 - h. groundwater pond shapes and wildlife habitat.
6. Evaluate and amend the zoning ordinance as needed to include requirements that will facilitate implementing the Landscape Master Plan as the area develops. These requirements should address:
 - a. site plan review.
 - b. plant selection criteria – quantity, species, size and location guidelines.
7. Continue to study the transportation needs of the Gravel Mining Area, and follow and update the Comprehensive Transportation Plan, Gravel Mining Area Transportation Plan and the Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan to develop an intermodal transportation system. This intermodal system should include:
 - a. Transit service/park & ride.
 - b. Pedestrian accessibility for local trips.
 - c. Acceptable levels of service.
 - d. Congestion mitigation and air quality standards.
 - e. Adequate rights-of-way, design speeds and parkway/urban standards.
 - f. Acceptable regional system/interchanges.
 - g. Appropriate trip generation/land use relationships and infrastructure improvements.

IV. PLAN ELEMENTS

A. LAND USE

In the conduct of the update of the GMASAP it was found that much of the plan, especially in area of goals and objectives, remains quite progressive and valid today. Some of these goals and objectives have in part resulted in this plan having uncommonly flexible and generous density and development parameters for both residential and non-residential development. To date this has helped achieve the realization of many of the benefits that can accompany denser and well designed developments of all type. It is important to note that in the decade or so since adoption of the SAP approximately 654 acres in the northwestern and southwestern portions of the GMA have either developed or have plans approved constituting 1,300 units of residential, 2,500,000 s.f. of retail, commercial service, civic and office and 100,000 s.f. of office showroom and town office development. It should also be noted that much of this development has received considerable positive recognition from residents, visitors and the development community. This recognition is affirmed by the vitality and vibrancy that exists in these areas day in and day out. This overall experience of where plan flexibility and generosity has apparently created excellent development results since its adoption has also led to the expectation that projects yet to be developed in the GMA will have benefits, designs and amenities that are equal to or greater than what has been developed to date.

Concept Plan

A Concept Plan for the future development of the Gravel Mining Area has been developed which is based on the vision for the area and the City's goals. This Concept Plan has gone through a series of substantial revisions, beginning with work by the Task Force, proceeding through its use in the Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR), its revision and use in the April 1997 draft of the Special Area Plan, *revised* to reflect the first development, Arbor Lakes, in the Town Center area and revised again now for the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Updates. The Concept Plan is intended to serve many functions: as a visual depiction of the City's goals for the area; as an illustration of one response to the site planning constraints in the Gravel Mining Area; and as a concept which illustrates the proposed future character of the area.

The Concept Plan is not intended to be used, nor does it have the detail, to regulate the development of individual parcels of land. It is, however, intended to guide the general land use, character, and site planning process for specific parcels. A series of drawings illustrating significant features of the Concept Plan have been included in the following pages in the sections devoted to each topic. These figures and the accompanying text provide the framework for the development of all of the land within the Gravel Mining Area. For example, where the Concept Plan depicts an open space linkage, it is important

that site specific plan review incorporate the proposed linkage, or that an alternative linkage be designated at that time.

The Concept Plan (illustrated on Figure 1) is organized by potential predominant land use categories in each of the project areas. In the implementation stage of the Concept Plan, the market will have a strong influence on the actual uses proposed. It should be understood that the principal underlying objective of this plan is to achieve a rich mixture of land uses throughout the project area, and within specific parcels and buildings where appropriate. In the Town Center Area, the principal mixed land use pattern has been established, along with a strong unifying framework of design elements. The City and the landowners plan to continue to build on the successful integration of land uses in the Town Center and other areas within the GMA, and extend the mixed land use pattern throughout the project area. Great care will be taken to insure compatibility between different land uses, through careful site planning and design. A strong image and unique character will be ensured through a commitment to the design framework, controlling project architecture, landscaping, signage, lighting, and all other physical design elements.

The Concept Plan is one step in the process of formulating, approving and implementing the vision for the Gravel Mining Area. Other steps in the process, more or less in order from general to specific, are listed below. All items below are complete or nearly complete for the Arbor Lakes area. For the rest of the GMA, the first four items are complete; the next ones are part of the implementation steps yet to be finalized for future projects:

<u>Step</u>	<u>Intent</u>
AUAR Land Use Concept Plan	Shows general land uses, limits of intensity
Special Area Concept Plan (Fig. 1)	Guides general land use, character
Concept Plan Elements (Figs. 2 to 18)	Illustrate principles to be followed in site plans
PUD Ordinance (by City)	Establishes process for approval of projects
PUD (by developer)	Guides specific land uses, site plan, design framework
Design Framework (part of PUD)	Illustrates expectations for building materials and design, landscaping, signage, streetscape elements, public works projects, etc.
Site Plans, Building Plans	Project specific designs

The PUD will follow the limits imposed by the AUAR Mitigation Plan, but may consider creative ways to mix or redistribute the uses, density and intensity. The overall PUD plan will stay within the numbers analyzed in the AUAR and set forth in the AUAR Mitigation Plan.

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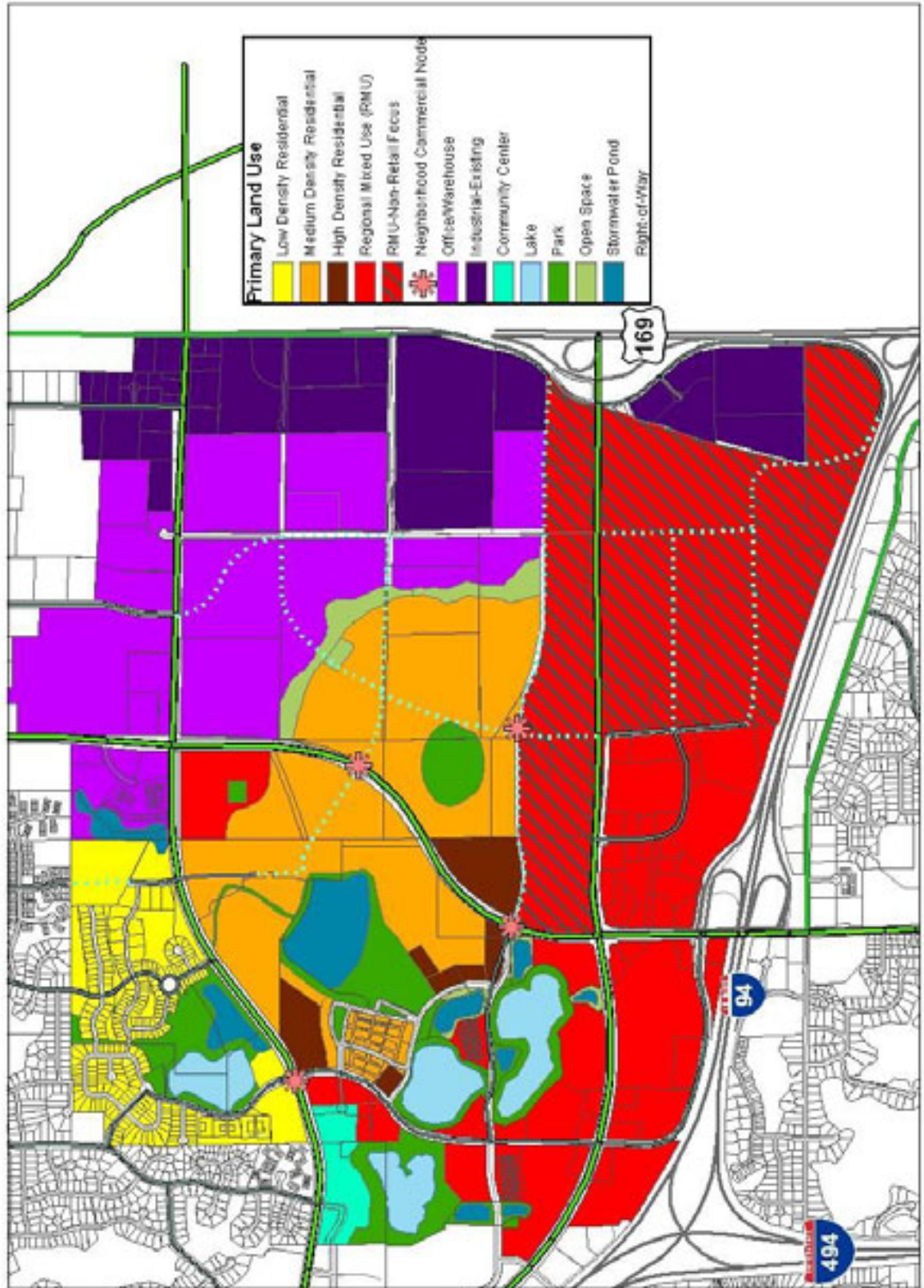
The features of the Concept Plan illustrated in the following sections and figures are:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Concept Plan | 10. Ground Water/Concept Storm |
| 2. Major Uses | Ponds |
| 3. Regional Mixed Use | 11. Hierarchy of roads |
| 4. Town Center Commercial | 12. Transit considerations |
| 5. Neighborhood Commercial Use | 13. Street Character |
| 6. Office-Warehouse/Industrial Use | 14. Neighborhoods |
| 7. High Density Residential Use | 15. Major Open Space |
| 8. Medium Density Residential Use | 16. Neighborhood Parks |
| 9. Low-Medium Density
Residential Use | 17. Open Space Linkages |

MAPLE GROVE GRAVEL MINING AREA

Maple Grove Gravel Mining Area

Figure 1



MAPLE GROVE GRAVEL MINING AREA

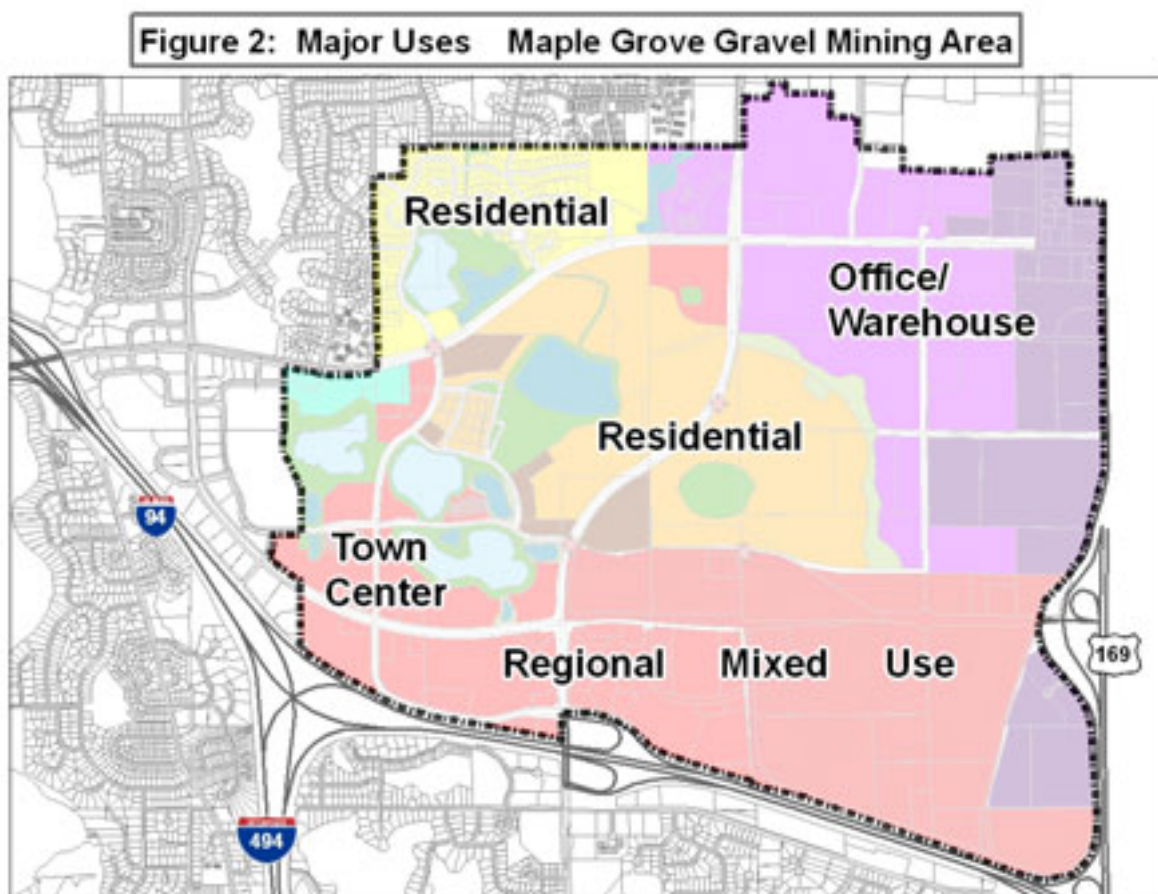
	Total Acres	Developed	Undeveloped	% Developed
Gravel Mining Area	1,955.4	953.0	1,002.4	47.7%
				% of Total
Low-Medium Density Residential	116.0	87.0	29.1	5.9%
Medium Density Residential	283.5	48.8	234.7	14.5%
High Density Residential	39.1	1.8	37.3	2.0%
Town Center Residential	9.0	9.0	0.0	0.5%
Regional Mixed Use	246.2	218.4	27.8	12.6%
Regional Mixed Use: Non-Retail				
Focus	315.9	0.0	315.9	16.2%
Existing Industrial	81.7	81.7	0.0	4.2%
Office/Warehouse	359.2	142.2	217.1	18.4%
Park and Open Space	148.8	38.1	110.7	7.6%
Groundwater and Stormwater Ponds	116.8	92.2	24.6	6.0%
Public/Semi-Public	32.3	27.1	5.2	1.7%
ROW	187.1	187.1	0.0	9.6%

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The amended Concept Plan for the Gravel Mining area can be simplified into four general areas, as shown in Figure 2 below. First is the **Town Center** area, a pedestrian-friendly mixed use area near the three large groundwater ponds on the west edge of the GMA. In actuality the first development in the GMA were the initial phases of the Town Center which was constructed along an alignment following what is now called Main Street extending north from Elm Creek Boulevard. It includes a mixture of traditional and contemporary commercial forms, a limited amount of office space and residential and civic uses. A final phase of the Town Center is anticipated in the development of a library, amphitheater, civic campus and adjoining mixed uses extending north of the Maple Grove Government Center along Main Street up to Weaver Lake Road.

The **Regional Mixed Use** area is intended for high intensity commercial, office, office/service, high density residential, or a combination, in the area generally straddling Elm Creek Boulevard across the entire width of the GMA and north in to the Town Center. Along the eastern edge is the proposed **Office/Warehouse** area containing over 5 million SF of existing, planned and redeveloped office-warehouse and other light industrial uses.

The central portion of the GMA will contain several **Residential** neighborhoods with over 5,000 residential units. By plan it is possible to have additional residential units in areas designated Regional Mixed Use.



Concept Plan

The land uses in Table 1 and illustrated on Figure 1 are expressed in terms of basic land use categories. All land use designations are generalized, and mixed uses will be encouraged in all areas. The land uses described below are the *dominant* land uses in each area, but other land uses will be allowed and encouraged through the use of mixed use, planned unit developments. A detailed table of land use by analysis area is included in the AUAR.

Commercial

Commercial uses will be allowed in a variety of ways within the Regional Mixed Use area and in a limited way in the Neighborhood Commercial areas, as described on the following pages.

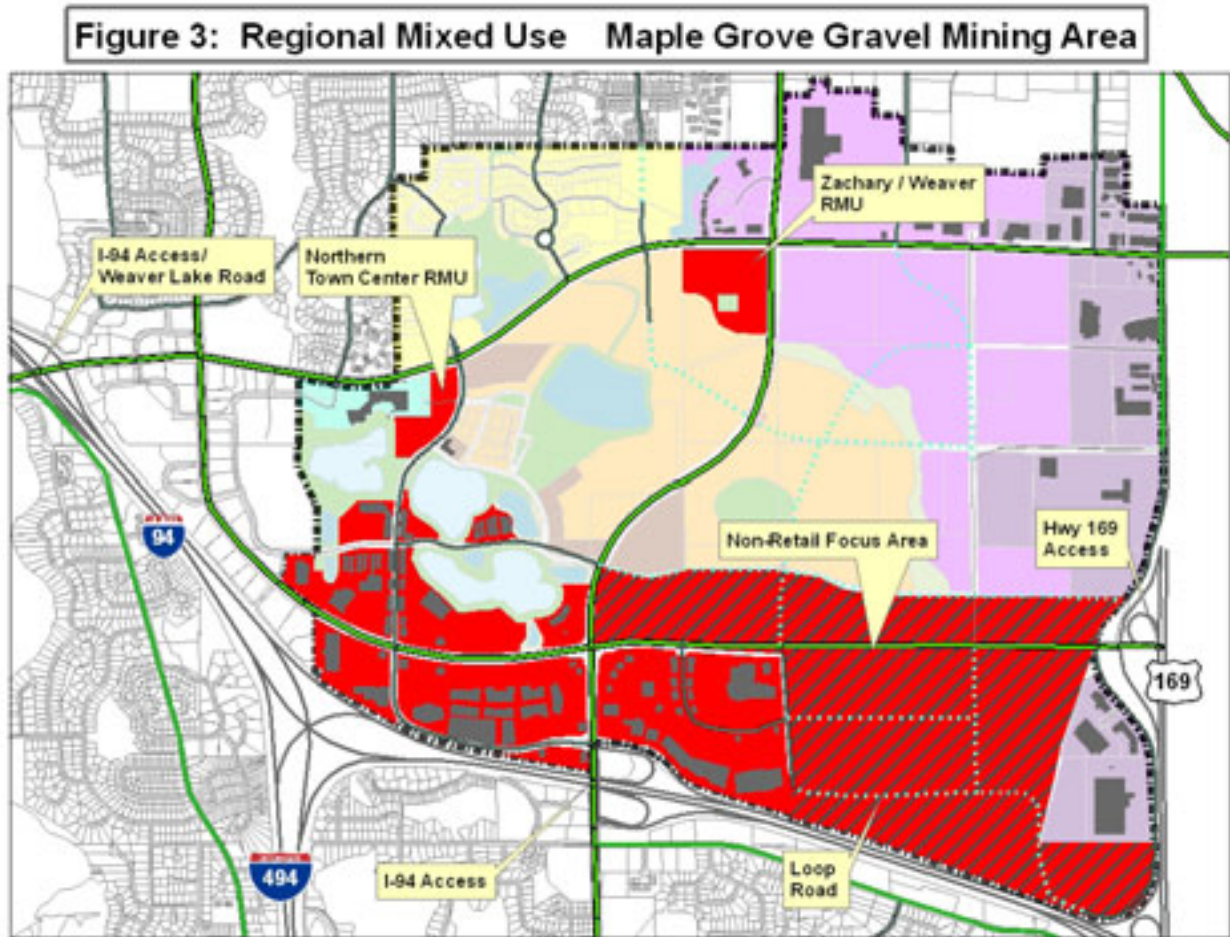
Regional Mixed Use

The Regional Mixed Use (RMU) designation, illustrated on Figure 3 is intended to provide an opportunity for the most intense land uses within the GMA. The area will allow a mix of various commercial, office, office-service, and high density housing uses, either on free-standing parcels, in mixed use planned unit developments, or mixed within individual buildings.

For the most part, the RMU area has excellent access to the regional highway system with interchanges at Hemlock/I-94 and 77th/Highway 169, plus access through the existing commercial area to the west via the Weaver Lake Road/I-94 interchange. The RMU areas west of Hemlock Lane and the 100 acres immediately south east of Hemlock Lane and Elm Creek Boulevard have approximately 2.3 million square feet of predominantly retail, commercial service and corporate uses all of which has developed since 2000. The balance of the RMU area was designated RMU Non-Retail Focus in 2006.

Internally, it is assumed that in the RMU area between Zachary Lane and Highway 169 there will be a loop road off providing access to the interior parcels from the intersections with Elm Creek Boulevard. There would also be an east-west pedestrian and vehicular "spine" which will serve as the organizing feature for the various uses. Along this spine on-street parking and build-to line development will be encouraged, with a consistent landscape and streetscape theme of elements to tie the area together, as an alternative to busy Elm Creek Boulevard.

There are currently two undeveloped RMU (excludes the RMU- Non Retail Focus areas) areas remaining in the GMA which are located at the southwest quadrant of Main Street and Weaver Lake Road and the southwest quadrant of Zachary Lane and Weaver Lake Road. The Main Street and Weaver Lake Road location is approximately 13 acres and the approximate southerly 5 acres is the location for the new planned County library. This area with the development that may occur adjacent to the library is envisioned to become the third and northerly expansion of the Town Center area. The Zachary Lane RMU area is approximately 22 acres in size and was added to the plan as a result of a concept that was presented by the property owner during the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update process. It is expected that this RMU area will have a mixture of high density residential and commercial service businesses to support the nearby residential population. The actual scope and mix of these uses will ultimately be determined through the PUD review process.



Regional Mixed Use Non-Retail Focus

East of Hemlock Lane the RMU is open to a combination of land uses based on market conditions, although the assumption is that there will be a higher concentration of office and office/service uses on the east side, due to the large retail component that has developed in the Arbor Lakes projects, but also the possibility of additional high density housing.

The expectation for the area identified on the plan as Regional Mixed Use: Non-Retail Focus is that this area will develop in a more compact, vertically integrated manner having predominately office and/or corporate uses. Near the nodes of arterial roadways, uses that would support office and/or corporate development such as hospitality and lodging would also be appropriate.

Consideration of development incentives may be possible for future office/corporate facilities that would exceed three stories in height in this area and/or integrate transit facilities. **Also and as pointed out in the Town Center section of the plan, as time moves on, the City will be receptive to and encourage infill development opportunities of parking fields in the Regional Mixed Use and Regional Mixed Use Non-Retail Focus areas that may occur as a**

result of increased viability of parking decks and/or the development of more robust local transit infrastructure and innovations.

During the 2008 plan update process, the market was indicating continuing retail momentum sufficient enough to suggest the possibilities of a regional shopping center east of the Fountains at Arbor Lakes. A typical regional shopping center could consume 70 acres (including Mall of America) of land which constitutes 17% of the RMU-Non Retail Focus Area. Such a proposal could be considered if it were of a design and composition that would be considered a new generation of regional shopping center which would include office and public uses and transit infrastructure integral with the center and could include residential uses as well.

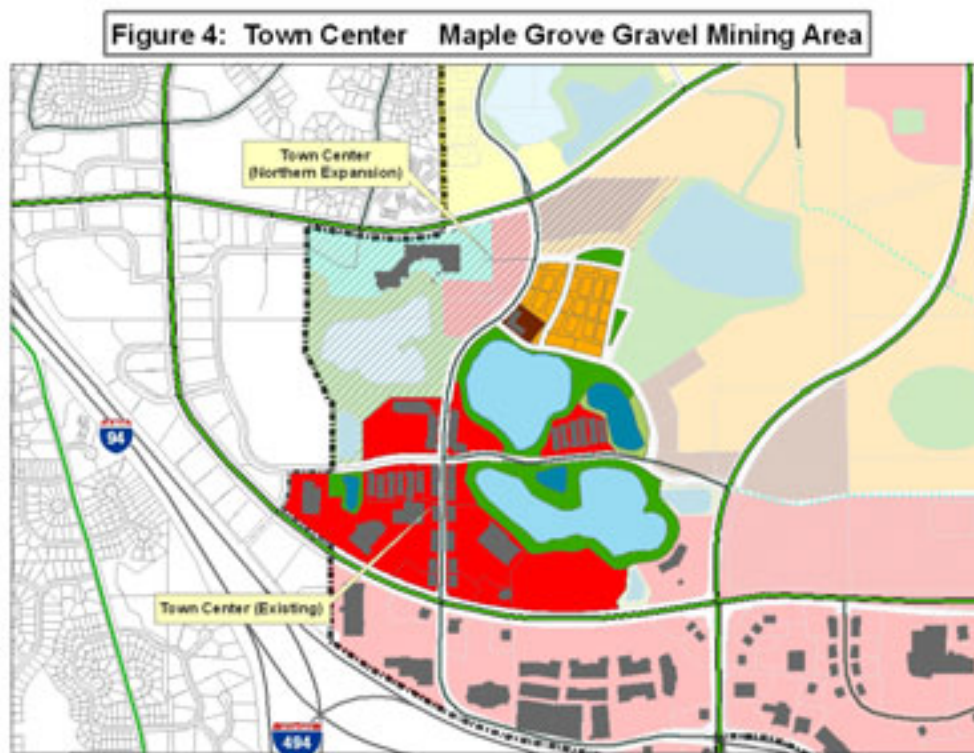
Town Center

Since the adoption of the GMA Special Area Plan, one of the original and paramount goals of the plan for the creation a Town Center for Maple Grove has been realized. This can be considered no small accomplishment given the limited success nationally in the creation of town centers much less one as vibrant and thriving as Maple Grove's.

Although different in location and configuration from what was originally envisioned in the Special Area Plan, the Town Center can be described as a mixture of traditional and contemporary retail and office forms and uses accompanied by residential and civic uses in the form of the Just Off Main townhomes and the Maple Grove Government Center all connected with well placed pedestrian infrastructure between the uses leading to the trail rounds of Arbor Lake, North Arbor Lake and West Arbor Lake. In just seven short years the Town Center has grown almost a quarter of a mile along Main Street north of Elm Creek Boulevard. It is anticipated in the next few years to grow again another half mile to Weaver Lake Road with the construction of the Hennepin County Library, the amphitheater on West Arbor Lake and surrounding developments.

Besides the library, the final phase of the Town Center area, which may be considered the northern anchor of the Town Center, will include the many amenities that are illustrated in the City's Vision Plan for the Public Spaces of Arbor Lakes <http://www.ci.maple-grove.mn.us/filestorage/139/161/VISION-PLAN.pdf> as well as transition to substantial residential development to the north and east some of which already exists in the form of the Bridges at Arbor Lakes, Maple Lakes and the Lakes at Maple Grove.

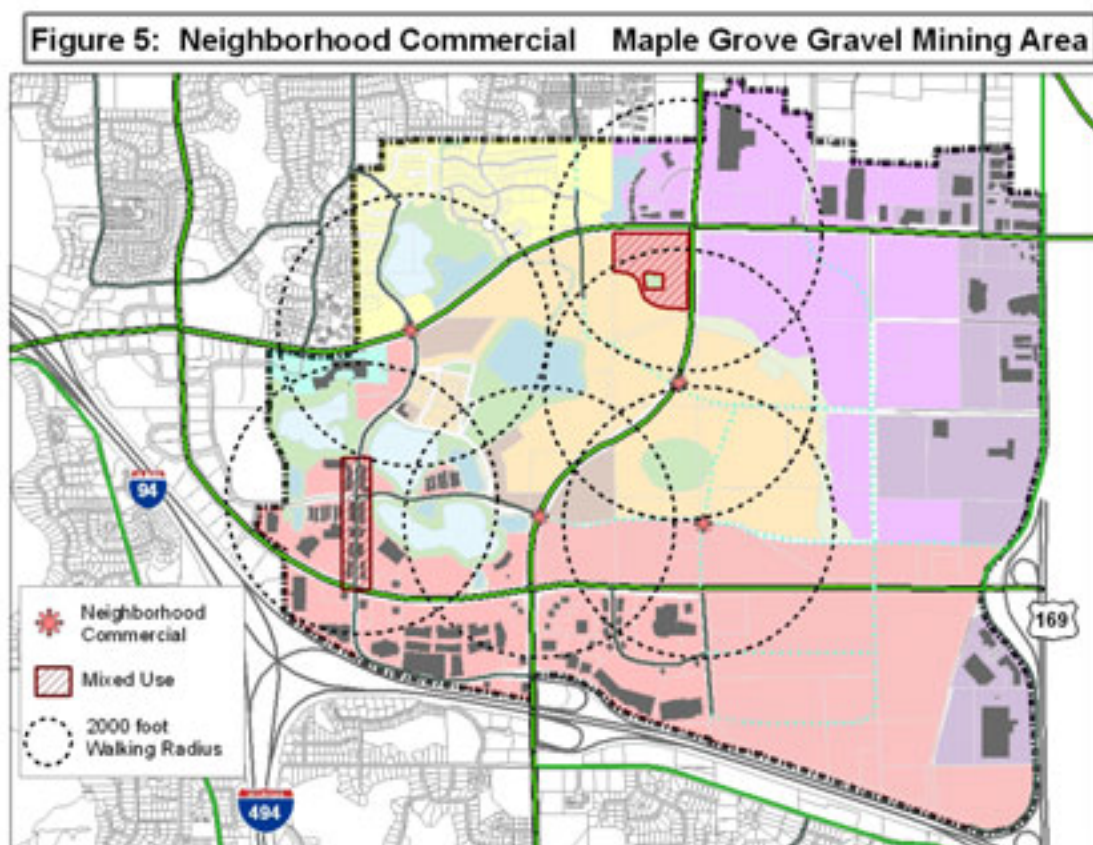
As time moves on, and as pointed out previously in the Regional Mixed Use section of this plan, the City will be receptive to and encourage infill development opportunities of parking fields in the Town Center that may occur as a result of increased viability of parking decks and/or the development of more robust local transit infrastructure and innovations.



Neighborhood Commercial

There are a series of planned Neighborhood Commercial (NC) centers serving the outlying residential uses. These centers are viewed by this plan as being an added **optional** community amenity should the market find that they are viable. They have been illustrated on Figure 5 below. Each neighborhood center is encircled by a 2,000-foot walking radius (10 minute walk) to illustrate that each neighborhood has walking access to local commercial goods and services. Like the walking radius illustrations, the locations for neighborhood commercial development on the maps in this document are for purposes of **illustration** of **general** spacing and location with respect to residential areas and major roadways and the exact location of each site is not important until such time as specific proposals may be brought forth to the City for review and approval. The City's experience with neighborhood commercial uses is that up to 10,000 square feet is an appropriate size. The size of colored NC areas on the Concept Plan is not to scale, and each are supposed to represent an area of one acre and 10,000 square feet of development. NC areas will be limited to this size unless specific approval is granted for a larger center under PUD review.

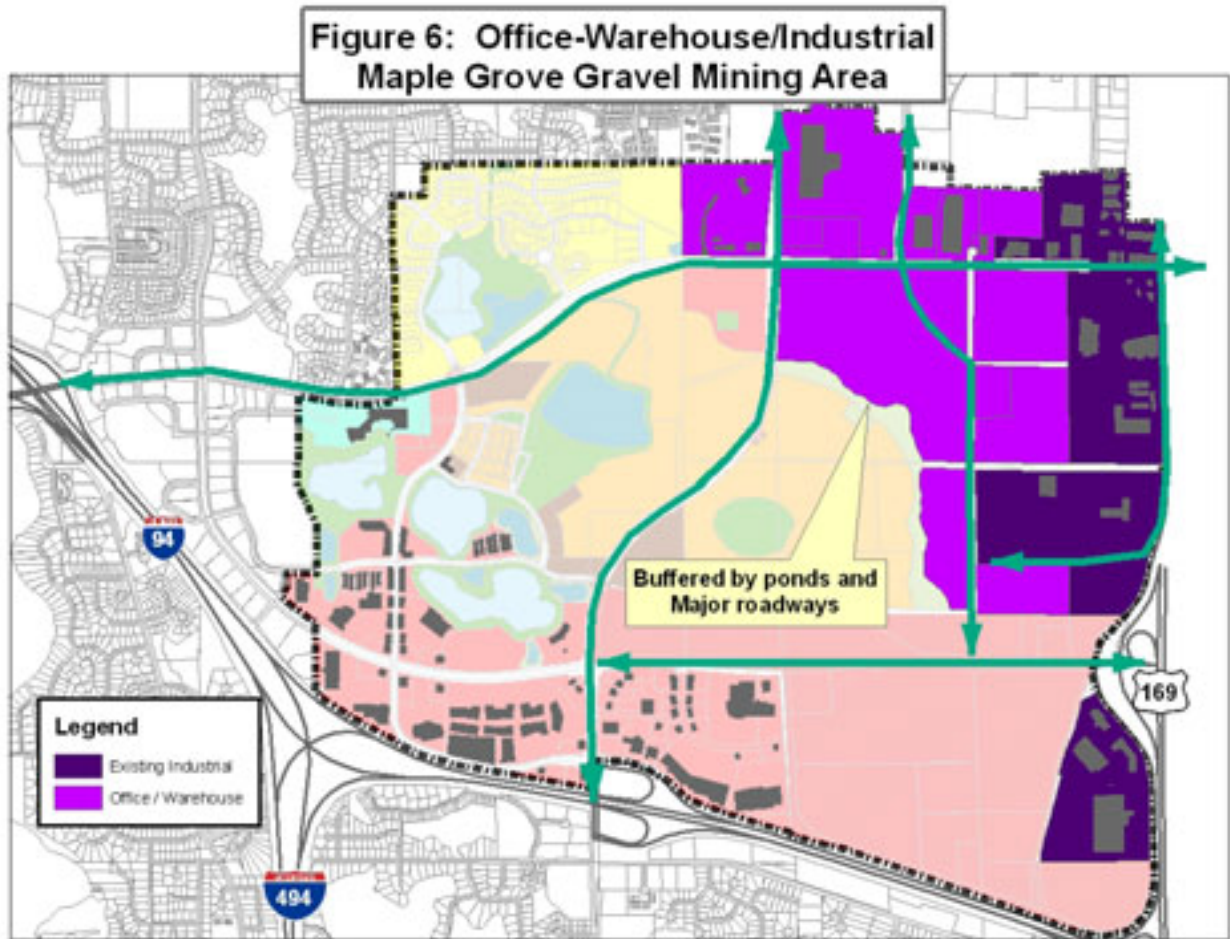
These neighborhood centers would consist of several small businesses integrated into the streetscape and surrounding residential areas, relying on on-street parking and parking lots carefully situated to the side or rear of the businesses. No large front parking lots would be allowed. The buildings would be set close to the street to provide easy walking access and visibility, with offices or apartments in the upper stories of the buildings. Lighting, signage, landscaping, and other features would be appropriate to a residential neighborhood setting.



Office-Warehouse/Industrial

The Industrial category includes two designations: Industrial-Existing and Office-Warehouse, and is concentrated in several areas on the east side of the Gravel Mining Area. See Figure 6 below. The Industrial-Existing use includes the developed parcels at the far eastern edge of the Gravel Mining Area. These uses could remain as they are or redevelop into more intense light industrial or office-warehouse uses. The Office-Warehouse use includes over 300 acres of land for redeveloped and new office-warehouse and light industrial uses, totaling over 5 million SF of space. This includes land currently developed in the industrial uses on the eastern edge of the GMA as well as vacant land which will be developed with these suggested uses. We have assumed that both the existing land to be redeveloped and new Office-Warehouse uses could develop at an FAR of 0.40 or greater. This FAR is a goal and not a mandate however land intensive uses will not be considered.

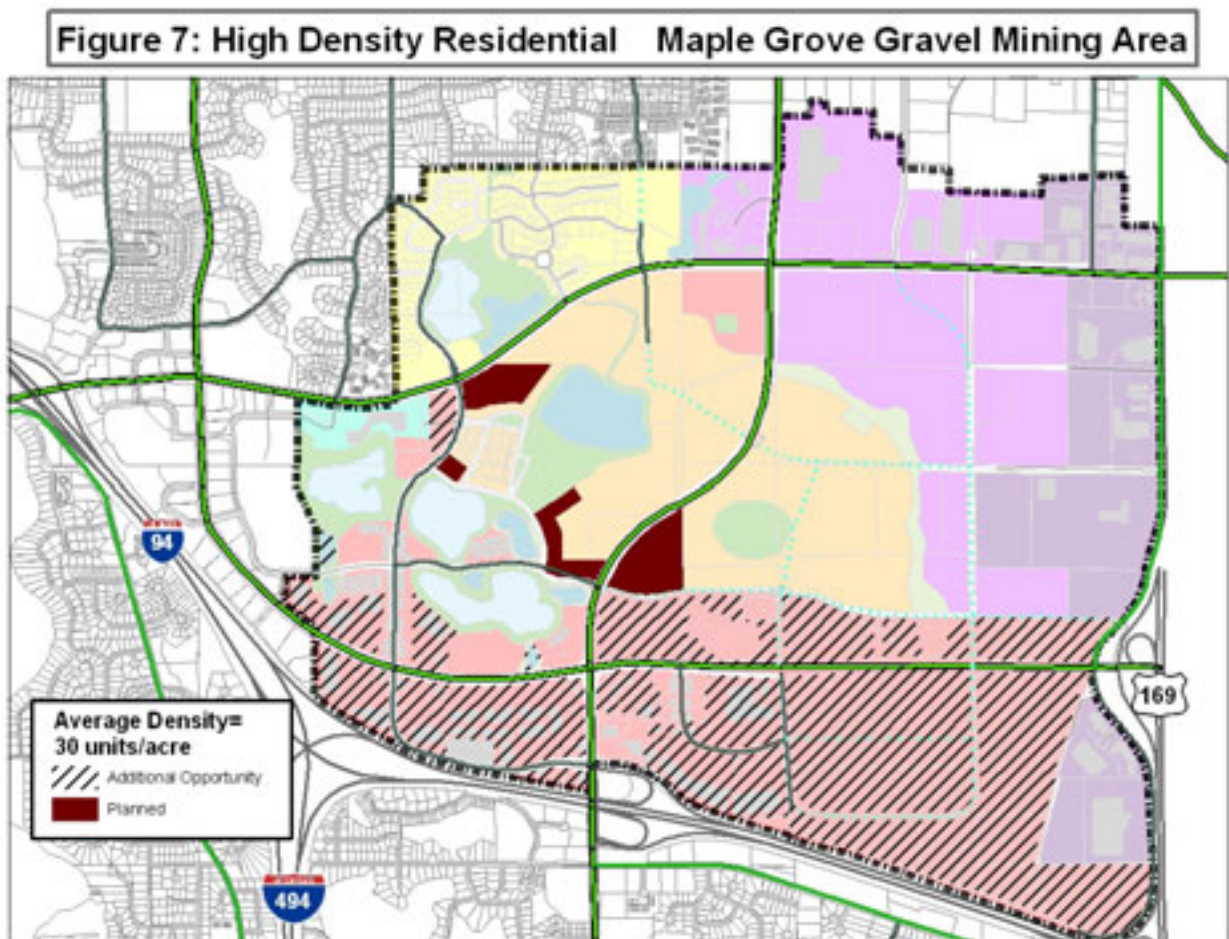
A related use, office/service businesses, with higher concentrations of office space and a higher quality image, might develop in the Office-Warehouse/Industrial area, but would also be considered in the Regional Mixed Use area, but only in limited fashion and if carefully integrated with the predominant office, commercial and high density residential uses.



Residential

The Residential category contains three basic target densities of residential development: Low-Medium at 4 dwelling units per acre, Medium at 8 dwelling units per acre, and High at 30 dwelling units per acre. A residential development will be considered if it is within a density range of 20% below or 10% above the aforementioned target densities. The development summary assumes that neighborhood parks and groundwater and storm ponds have been removed from this acreage, so these residential density numbers are considered "net" figures. Gross densities would be lower due to the parks, ponds and other design constraints.

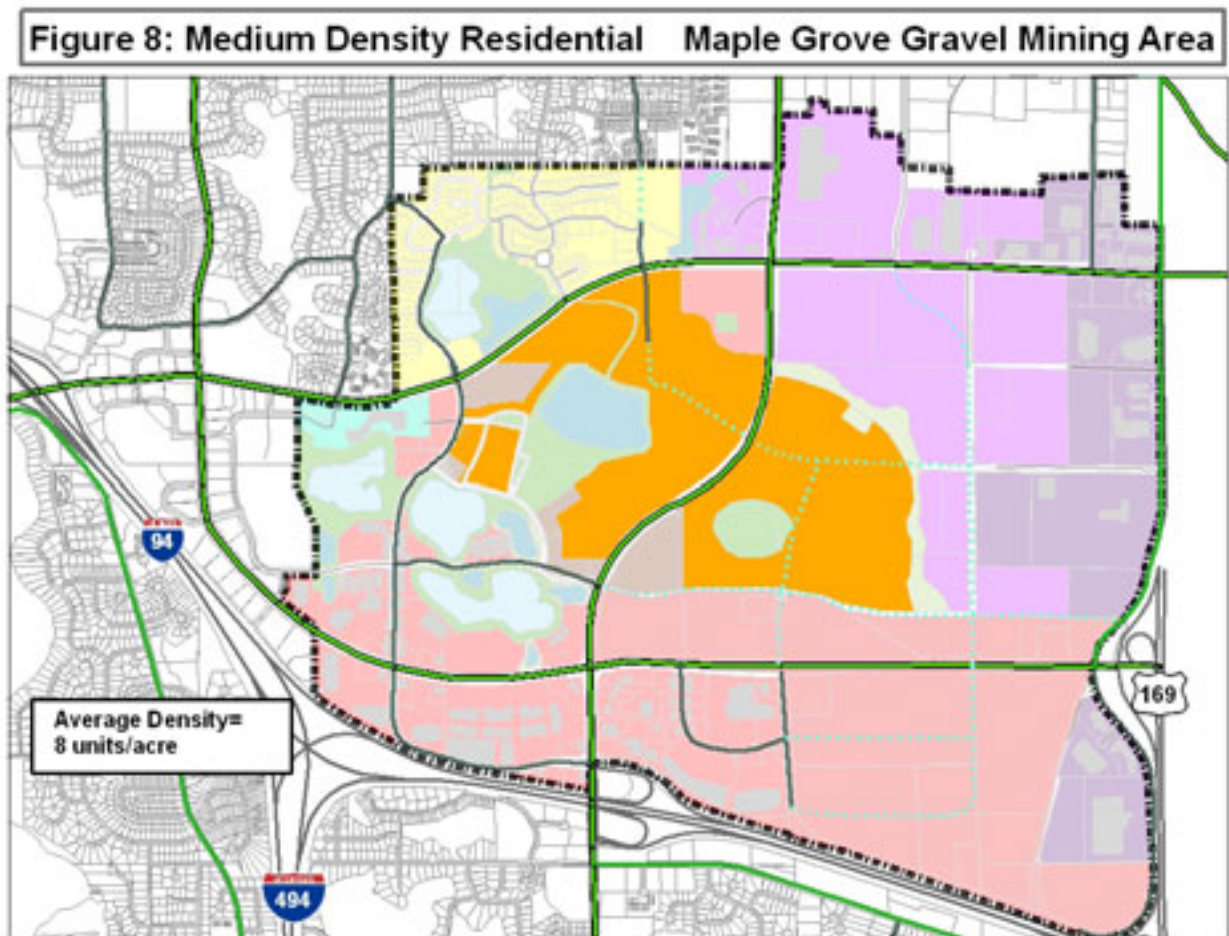
High Density Residential use is intended to provide for significant residential towers in the Town Center area, and adjacent to the Regional Mixed Use area. See Figure 7 below. There is an additional opportunity (also illustrated below) to develop High Density Residential uses in the Regional Mixed Use area, if carefully planned and designed, and integrated into commercial and office uses. These opportunity areas would be developed *in addition* to the proposed 900+ units of High Density residential use. Densities higher than noted above for high density proposals deemed to have extraordinary design, attributes and/or amenities may be approved on a case by case basis.



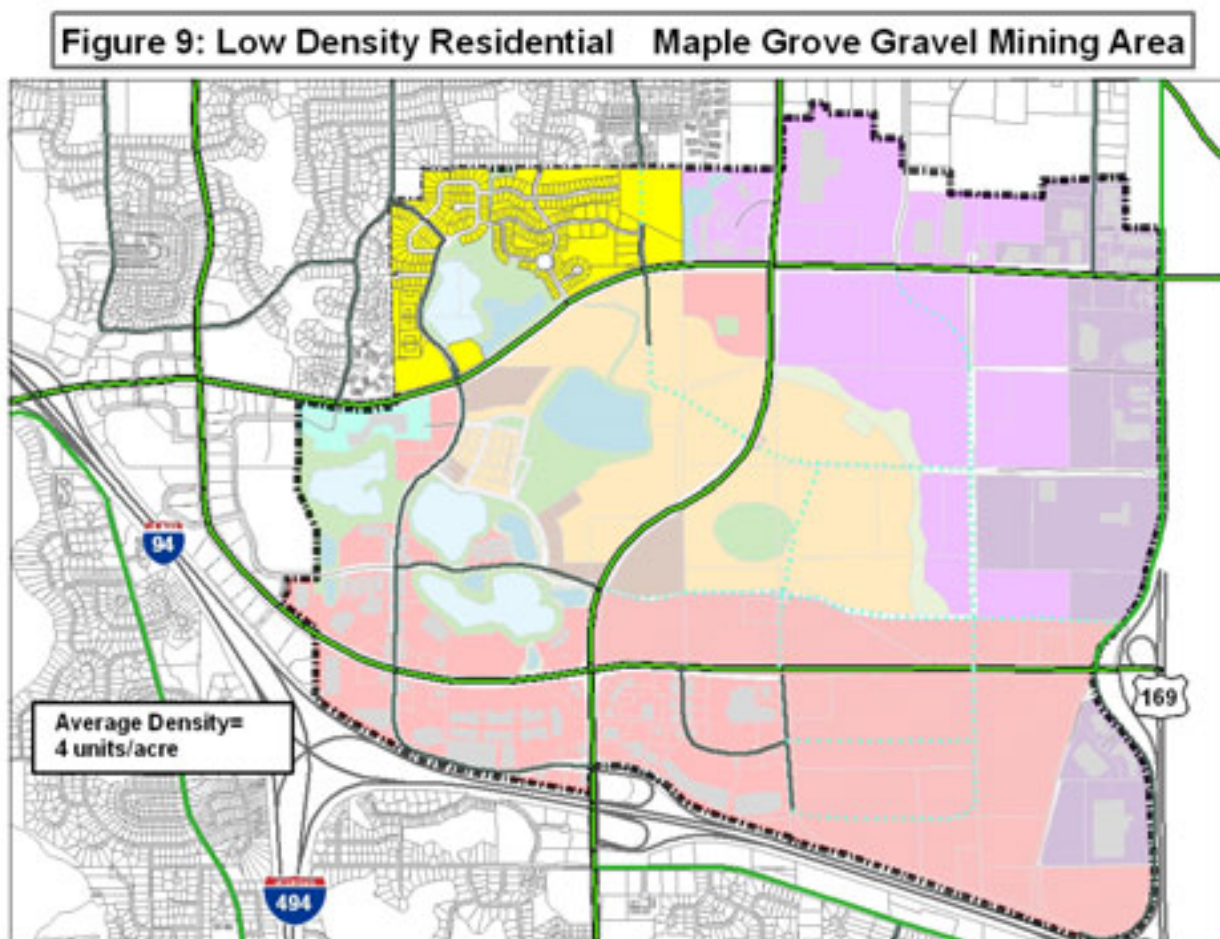
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The **Medium Density Residential** designation encompasses all other residential development in the central part of the Gravel Mining Area, south of Weaver Lake Road but north of Elm Creek Boulevard. See Figure 8 below. These uses shall include a mix of single family, townhouses, apartments, condominiums, and other more intense residential uses designed within a networked local street system in a pedestrian-oriented environment, provided the overall density target is reached. Given the situation of having density targets requiring mixtures of unit types over large areas such as the medium density category in combination with development proposals that may be overlaid on a phased basis over either a single ownership or over multiple ownerships, care will need to be exercised to assure that densities are allocated so as to not result in areas for future development having development potential deficits or voids and that all appropriate parties be made aware of density allocations during the development plan review process.

A substantial portion of this area could also be developed as a golf course depending on economic conditions and if a developer chose to do so. The alternative without a golf course was analyzed in the AUAR.



The **Low-Medium Density** Residential designation area totals 116 acres and includes the residential portion of the GMA lying north of Weaver Lake Road. Of these 116 acres all but 29 acres has either developed or has development plans approved since the adoption of the Special Area Plan in 1997. See Figure 9 below. This area serves as a transition in density from the medium density development planned south of Weaver Lake Road to the lower density residential areas already developed north of the Gravel Mining Area.



Parks and Open Space

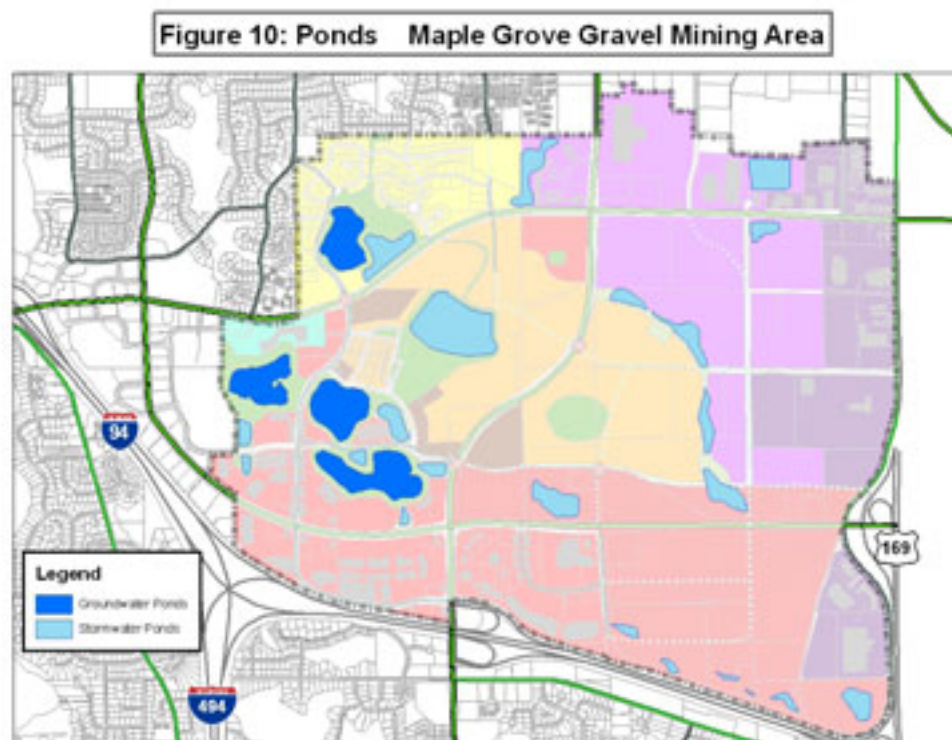
The parks and open space category includes developed and undeveloped open space uses. Many of the facilities in this category are on the western edge of the Gravel Mining Area just south of Weaver Lake Road. The undeveloped portions of this category will be completed as development progresses east through the GMA.

Plans include a 20 acre Community Park, a Neighborhood Park and a system of trails and pathways that encourage fluid and safe pedestrian movement from residence to park to shopping to work. The linear trail and open space system extends north across Weaver Lake Road, east across Zachary Lane, and south into the commercial area bordering Elm Creek Boulevard. These are discussed further in the section dealing with parks and open space.

Ponding

The ponding areas are of two types: stormwater and groundwater. The assumption has been that about 60 acres of groundwater ponds would remain within the Gravel Mining Area, although this number could change depending on the mining activities still being carried out. The stormwater ponds generally follow the drainage plan set forth in the 1985 Gravel Mining Area Plan (GMAP), and have been assigned to each of the land use areas at about 6% of the total land area. These numbers could also change depending on detailed design requirements. It is anticipated that storm runoff will not drain into the groundwater ponds, that such drainage will be diverted either by grading or piping to go into the storm system.

Consideration has been given to a linear series of waterways in the Gravel Mining Area, as part of the overall public open space system. An example of successful implementation of this water management concept exists in the Centennial Lakes development where a linear post mining storm pond system was designed and constructed in the middle of the development. This design was very effective in integrating essential infrastructure in the form of an amenity to surrounding land uses and coincidentally by its shape greatly increased the ratio of development areas to the amenity. In the GMA SAP these waterways are illustrated as lying between the medium density residential and the office warehouse areas east of Zachary Lane. (See Figure 10) Should it ultimately be determined that this concept is feasible in this portion of the GMA and since this is a situation where there is a clear link between land use and infrastructure planning, in order to assure its possibility of being implemented, it will need to be incorporated into the Water Resource Plan update as well.

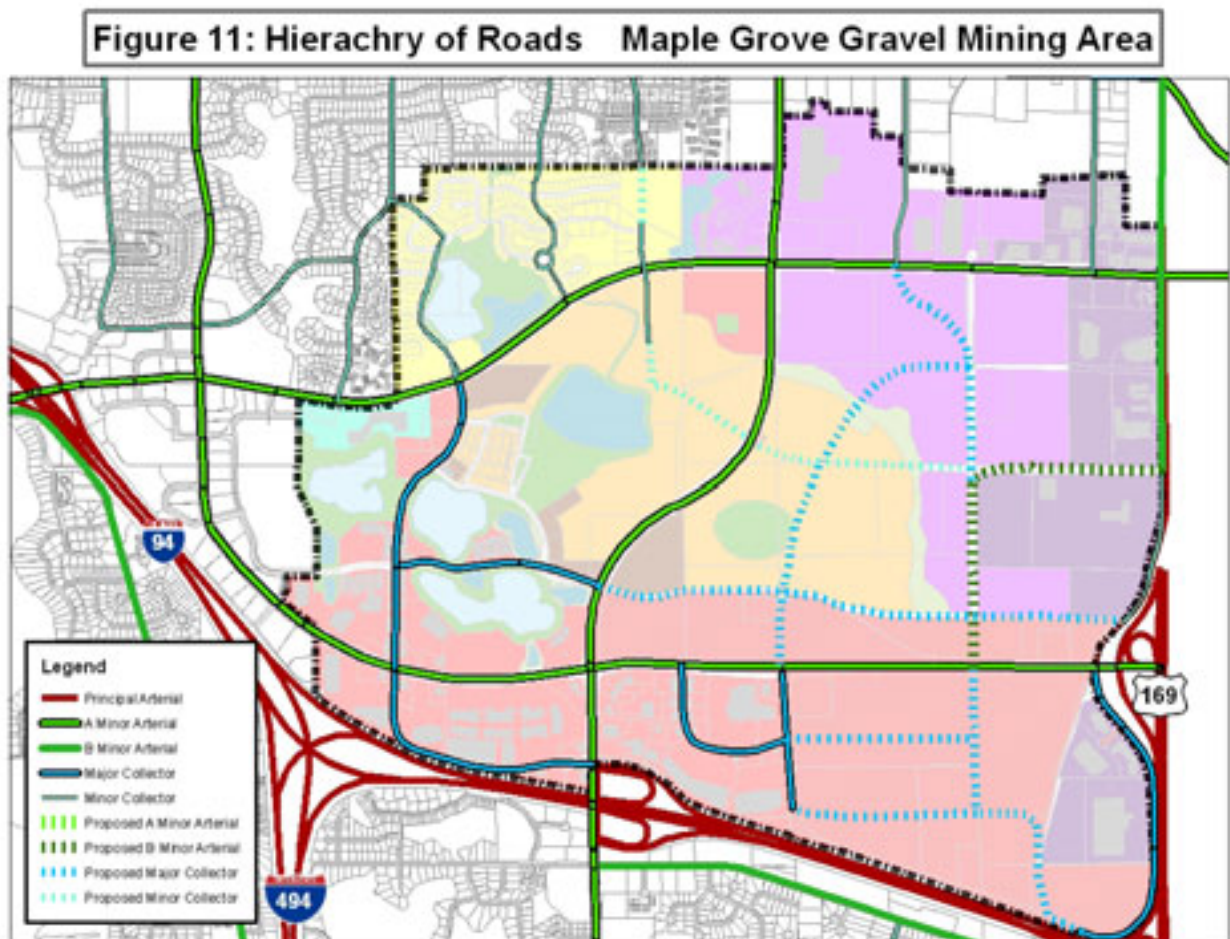


B. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation access in the Gravel Mining Area is one of the reasons this site is so key to the future of the City. It is rare to encounter almost two thousand acres of land served by three freeway interchanges, yet completely surrounded by existing development. The size, design speed and access limitations of the major roadways routed through the Gravel Mining Area present significant challenges for development of an integrated, pedestrian-friendly area.

Discussions with MnDOT, the Hennepin County Highway Department, and City staff have provided a framework for the design of the major roadways(minor arterials) much of which has been built since adoption of the initial GMA Special Area Plan.

Following the design and construction of the major roadway connections, the collector street system has been developed. The intent is to provide a network which would adequately serve all of the development proposed for the area. The hierarchy of proposed roads in the Concept Plan is illustrated below in Figure 11.



The “Traffic Impact Report” in the AUAR details the traffic analysis conducted for that study. A summary follows.

Overview

This Special Area Plan can be accommodated by the regional highway system according to the following schedule:

1. Up to 28 percent of the proposed land use, measured in terms of p.m. peak hour trip generation, can be developed with the completion of programmed regional improvements and recommended transit/TDM programs.
2. Up to 100 percent of the proposed land use, measured in terms of p.m. peak hour trip general, can be developed provided TH 169 has access control between I-94 and TH 610 and the recommended transit/TDM programs are in place.

The thresholds described above assume that the minor arterial system is completed, which for the exception of the widening of Weaver Lake Road through the GMA is now the case, as outlined in the Maple Grove Transportation Plan.

For purposes of traffic impact analysis, a development program somewhat higher than that reflected in Table 1 (and the AUAR) was utilized. Due to this fact, it is felt that the traffic analysis results are somewhat “conservative.”

Background

Up until the development of the initial GMA Special Area Plan in the mid 1990's, the expansion of urban development associated with the Metropolitan Area has resulted in the encirclement of the Gravel Mining Area, primarily by residential neighborhoods. Also during that time and despite the resulting pressure to develop the Gravel Mining Area, both the landowners and the City had taken a cautious approach, with the ultimate objective of finding the highest and best use for the area. The City, with the cooperation and support of the landowners, had undertaken several studies to determine the most appropriate land use and development strategy for the Gravel Mining Area. These studies have included:

1. The development of a land use concept plan that includes a higher density of development than the current land use plan;
2. A comprehensive traffic study that determined the roadway system required for circulation within the area (City of Maple Grove CBD Transportation Study); and
3. A traffic impact study to determine the effects of Gravel Mining Area development on the regional highway system (AUAR).

As noted earlier in the land use section, in the decade or so since the adoption of the GMA Special Area Plan, approximately 538 acres in the northwestern and southwestern portions of the GMA have either developed or have plans approved constituting 1,300 units of residential, 2,500,000 s.f. of retail, commercial service, civic and office and 100,000 s.f. of office showroom and town office development. It should be noted however that this development, although

significant and impressive, has been found in the 2005 GMA AUAR Update to be considerably less than what was modeled in the original GMA AUAR.

These studies, in combination with the plan amendment involving the RMU Non-retail Focus area, resulted in this Special Area Plan, with several important features:

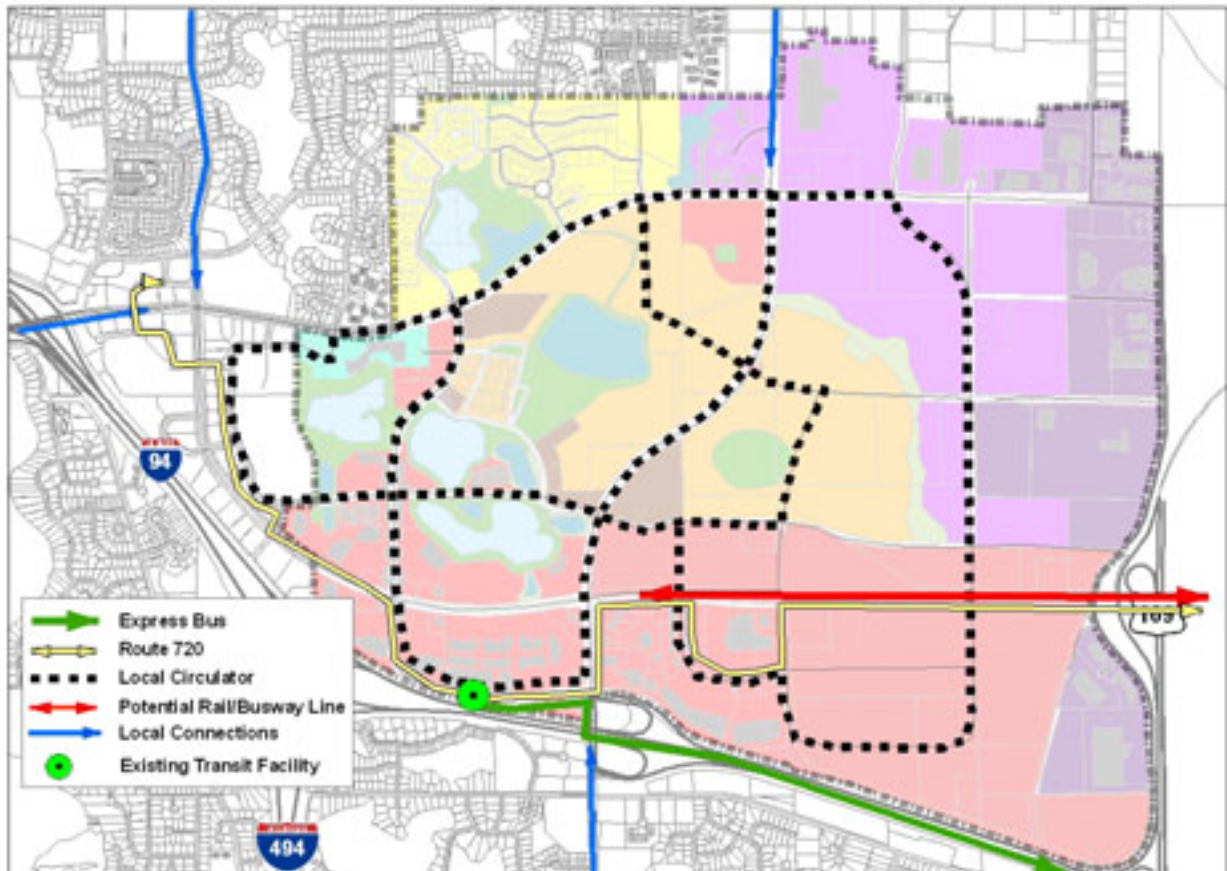
- A pedestrian-friendly ‘downtown,’ referred to as the Town Center, intended to provide a focal point for the Gravel Mining Area and the rest of the City. This area as it actually developed includes a mixture of traditional and contemporary urban design for the central commercial area (i.e., small businesses fronting onto the sidewalks and placed immediately adjacent to each other). Development to date includes medium and high density housing alternatives for all income ranges. The City will continue to strongly consider structured parking (ramps) which would be an important prerequisite to achieving a compact pedestrian-friendly environment.
- A possible regional shopping center, with associated supporting commercial activities, office and public uses and transit infrastructure integral with the center. This area is may also include high density housing.
- ‘Landmark’ office towers, to be situated in the Regional Mixed Use Non-Retail Focus area.
- An office/warehouse district.
- Low-medium and medium density neighborhoods.
- A ‘Central Park,’ which might include picnic areas, walking paths and other amenities, connected to a linear open space/parkway system.

Transit

Transit represents a relatively small but important part of the Gravel Mining Area transportation system. This includes transit into and out of the GMA (such as to neighboring communities and into Minneapolis), as well as a circulator system within the GMA. It is estimated that additional residential development will result in 300 additional work transit trips per day, requiring a minimum of four additional morning and afternoon bus trips. Reverse commuting is encouraged, and it is estimated that these trips, plus non-work trips, will contribute an additional 100 riders:

The transit improvements proposed for the GMA are consistent with the Maple Grove Transit Plan. This plan anticipates that additional transit services will be introduced as development occurs and funding becomes available. Additional park-and-ride lots are also assumed for other parts of the City, including the vicinity of the future I-94/TH 610 interchange. In 2007 a study was initiated to determine the viability of passenger rail service to the GMA via the Elm Creek Boulevard corridor. Some of the transit considerations incorporated into the Concept Plan are illustrated below in Figure 12

Figure 12: Transit Considerations Maple Grove Gravel Mining Area



Travel Demand Management (TDM)

TDM programs will also provide an opportunity to reduce travel demand on the regional highway system. The high concentration of employment anticipated for the area, particularly in the office complexes, provides the City with a tremendous opportunity to implement TDM programs. The City encourages new employers locating in the Gravel Mining Area to adopt programs that will:

- Promote carpooling by providing information on carpooling and vanpooling to employees on a regular basis, providing preferential parking and guaranteed-ride home;
- Encourage employees to participate in Minnesota Rideshare's ride-matching program;
- Encourage reverse commuting by mass transit to the GMA;
- Offer employees flexible work hours and set a goal to reduce peak hour trips by 20%; and

- Encourage participation in a Travel Demand Management Organization (TMO) specifically set up for the gravel mining area. This group will consider TDM measures that require cooperation among several employers such as, but not limited to:
 - Staggered start times
 - Van-pools
 - Trip reduction goals
 - Transit subsidies

In addition, participating employers, regardless of size, could provide convenient carpool/vanpool drop-off sites that do not interfere with other traffic. These drop-off sites would be consistent with applicable ADA requirements. The City may allow a group of employers to provide a shared drop-off site as long as the site is accessible to all participating employers.

It is the goal of the City to reduce peak hour trip generation to and from the study area by 10 percent through the use of a combination of transit service and TDM programs.

Pedestrian-Friendly Land Use and Transportation Planning

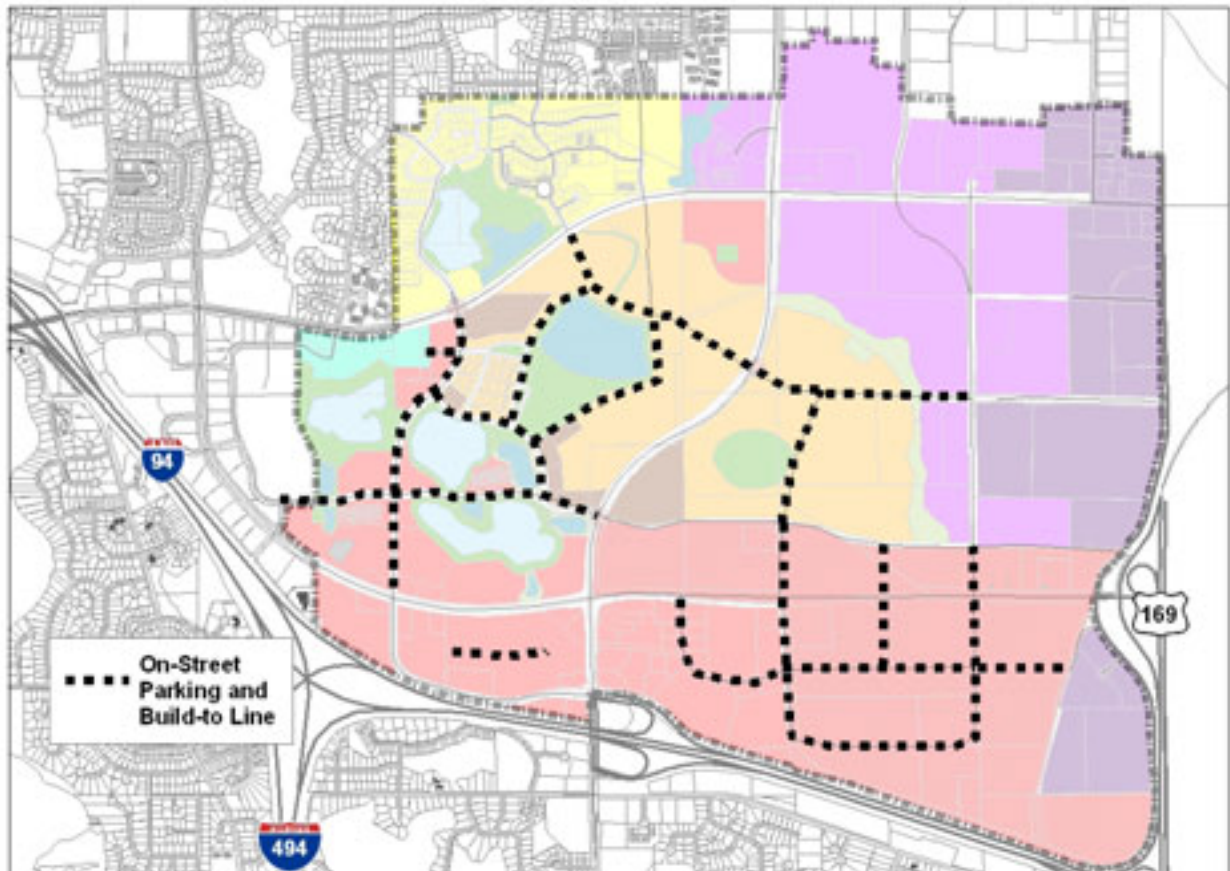
The City will continue to implement land use and transportation planning practices that support and encourage pedestrian and bicycle movement. An extensive system of sidewalks and trails will be provided that allows people to walk or bicycle between businesses such as stores, restaurants and offices. Specific site development will also encourage walking and biking. One of the keys to successful bicycle movement-is the provision of a unified system of trails, as proposed in this Plan (and described later in parks and open space).

There are also several key features of local streets which make them favorable to pedestrian activity. The first is to create spaces which serve as outdoor rooms by pulling buildings up to the edge of the sidewalks, rather than the traditional setting back of buildings from the street (often with parking lots along the street). Numerous examples of this can be found along Main Street and in the Bridges at Arbor Lakes. This concept is regulated through the use of a "build-to" line which replaces the typical setback in zoning regulations. There are a series of streets on which build-to lines will be required, and they are illustrated on Figure 13 below.

The second key feature is the provision of on-street parking. Pedestrians gain an enhanced sense of safety from the line of parked cars separating them from adjacent traffic. This greater comfort level leads to increased use of sidewalks, which encourages enhanced street activity in general. The significant streets designated to include on-street parking are illustrated below. Other local streets, especially within residential areas, will likely include on-street parking as well. Minor arterials will expressly not include on-street parking.

By encouraging these pedestrian-friendly development patterns, development in the area can also get away from providing parking for every use on an individual basis at the same level as typical suburban development.

Figure 13: Street Character Maple Grove Gravel Mining Area



C. HOUSING

Housing in the Gravel Mining Area

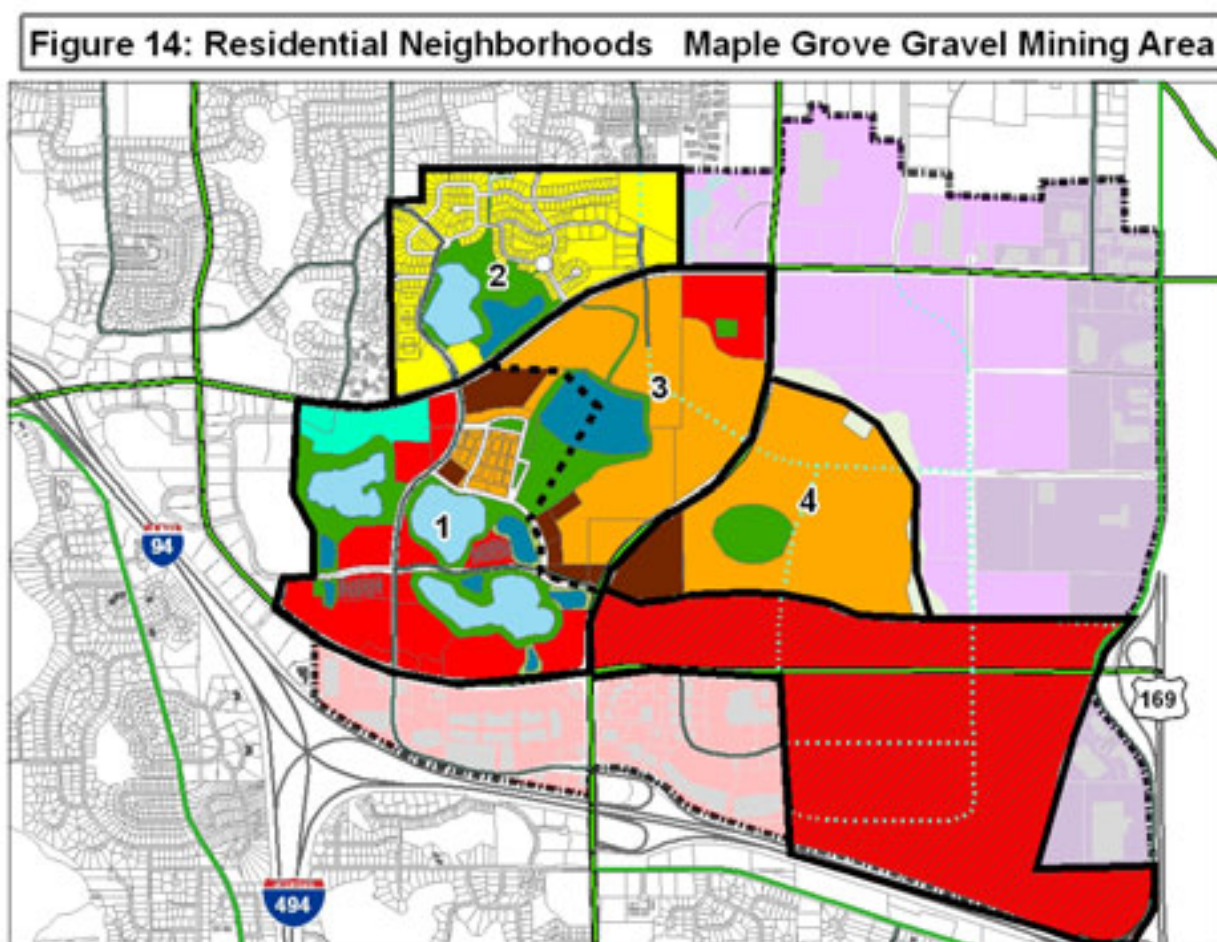
The GMASAP contains four distinct housing neighborhoods (Figure 14 below):

1. The Town Center, where housing has been and will continue to be mixed in with non-residential uses at appropriate densities. The area that has come to be known and perceived as the Town Center has grown over the past seven years and includes the residential developments of Just Off Main (125 units, 20% of which have rents affordable to low income households), Arbor Lakes Commons (50 units of affordable senior rental housing), and portions of The Bridges at Arbor Lakes (20% of the first phase units are affordable owner occupied). There remains the potential for additional residential development on both sides of Main Street up to Weaver Lake Road as the Town Center continues to grow with the addition of the new library, amphitheater and town green.
2. North of Weaver Lake Road, serving as a transition to existing single-family neighborhoods north of GMA. Almost 800 units at low-medium density (4 units/acre).

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3. The Central portion of the GMA is to be built around central amenities including a central park and the linear open space/parkway system. This area comprises approximately 200 acres, is expected to have low, medium and high density housing types and may accommodate as many as 1,400 residential units. A possible alternative for this area and/or area four that has been discussed is the inclusion of a golf course as the central element. This obviously would most likely affect the projected unit counts for this area.
4. The fourth proposed housing area lies in the northeast quadrant of Arbor Lakes Parkway and Hemlock Lane. Much of this neighborhood is centered on a neighborhood park. This area may yield approximately 1,600 units.

As noted earlier in the Medium Density Residential Section, there is an expectation that a wide variety of housing styles, types, and choices would be developed in the remaining Medium Density Residential areas of the GMA. The overall densities in these areas would be 8 units/acre net but individual components of a development may go higher and lower than this target number.



The Gravel Mining Area has helped play a major role in the City's overall housing plans since it represents a significant portion of the City's undeveloped land, has potential amenities that are attractive for residential development, and has excellent access to the existing roadway system and growing transit infrastructure. Current needs and forecasted growth show, as in the rest of the Metropolitan Region and Greater Minnesota, there continues to be a significant need for the

development of affordable life-cycle housing. "Life-cycle" housing refers to the availability of housing for people at all stages of their lives. Steps taken by Maple Grove throughout the 1990s and since including the adoption of this plan have helped in the development of affordable life cycle housing.

As part of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update process, action was taken to incorporate the update of the analysis and action elements of the GMASAP housing section into the update of the housing element of the citywide Comprehensive Plan.

PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

The City will add substantially to its park, recreation and open space system with the development of the Gravel Mining Area. The City has already initiated some of the planned improvements with the acquisition of land for planned park and trail amenities. This will continue as land develops.

Planned facilities include a 15-20 acre Community Park positioned adjacent to a large 20 plus acre storm pond west of Hemlock-Zachary Lane and north of the three Arbor Lakes. This park is one of only two community parks in Maple Grove, the other being Weaver Lake Park. Community parks serve a unique purpose in the system by providing large community gathering space for group activities and festivities. This park facility would also serve as the neighborhood park for the some 4500 residents projected for this part of the Gravel Mining Area. Development of the Community Park is dependent on residential growth and available funds.

Neighborhood Parks

The Concept Plan also includes a neighborhood park east of Hemlock-Zachary to serve the projected residential community in this area. This park will be more in keeping with a traditional neighborhood park but may include some additional athletic facilities because of its somewhat isolated location within the park system. Trails and sidewalks will connect this park to the residents as well as the public amenities and shopping district of Arbor Lakes. The neighborhood park is intended to be at least 10 acres in size.

There may be additional park needs requiring smaller pocket parks to be embedded within the residential zones to better serve the higher residential densities planned for the GMA. These would be at the discretion of the Park Board and located based on development submittals. Pocket parks have and could continue to be funded, built and managed jointly with the neighboring homeowners association.

Trails and Open Space Linkages

A completely linked system of trails and open spaces is proposed in the Concept Plan as well. This trail system would provide connections across major arterials at controlled intersections, providing safe access throughout the area for walking for walking and biking. See Figure IV-21

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below. The existing and proposed ponds which will be created or enhanced as development occurs will also add to the open space system. There are approximately 120 acres of future groundwater and storm ponds shown on the Concept Plan.

The overall Park System Plan for the Gravel Mining Area is included on the following page as Figure 15:

